



## DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

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DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

MARY ALICE EVANS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Statement of

**LUIS P. SALAVERIA**  
**Director**

Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

before the

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY**

Thursday, April 16, 2015

10:05 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 309

in consideration of

**SCR71, SD1**

**REQUESTING THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO  
CONDUCT A STUDY REGARDING THE FEASIBILITY AND COST OF  
CONSTRUCTING A SMALL, RURAL LANDING SITE OR AIRSTRIP FOR USE  
BY THE NATIONAL GUARD AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS IN SOUTH  
PUNA AND EVALUATE THE POSSIBILITY OF USING BASALT REBAR OR  
LUNAR BASALTIC CEMENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION.**

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism supports the intent of this resolution to evaluate the possibility of using basalt rebar in constructing an airstrip for use by the National Guard and emergency responders in South Puna.

The Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES) referenced in the resolution has recently installed a basalt sidewalk in downtown Hilo and is leading the State's effort in evaluating basalt rebar as a substitute for steel/iron rebar for civil engineering construction. This resolution aligns with PISCES' interest in conducting an engineering study to assess the properties of basalt rebar for State construction (basalt rebar is stronger and lighter than steel or iron rebar, and does not rust). However, DBEDT defers to the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency regarding the impact of this proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.

DENNIS "FRESH" ONISHI  
Council Member  
District 3



PHONE: (808) 961-8396  
FAX: (808) 961-8912  
EMAIL: [donishi@co.hawaii.hi.us](mailto:donishi@co.hawaii.hi.us)

**HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL**  
25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 15, 2015

The Honorable Gregg Takayama, Chair  
and Members of the House Committee on Public Safety

Dear Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 71, S.D. 1, requesting the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to conduct a study regarding the feasibility and cost of constructing a small, rural landing site or airstrip for use by the National Guard and emergency responders in south Puna and evaluate the possibility of using basalt rebar or lunar basaltic cement in the construction.

I support the intent of this Concurrent Resolution, and agree that a study should be conducted so that all options are explored in regards to the health and safety of our residents.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Onishi", written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

Dennis "Fresh" Onishi  
Hawai'i County Council Member

**VALERIE T. POINDEXTER**

*Council Vice Chair  
Council District 1*



Phone: (808) 961-8828  
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**HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL**

*County of Hawai'i  
Hawai'i County Building  
25 Aupuni Street, Suite 1402  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720*

April 15, 2015

Committee on Public Safety  
Representative Greg Takayama, Chair  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Email: [reptakayama@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:reptakayama@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Email: [repyamashita@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repyamashita@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Subject: Testimony Supporting SCR 71, SD 1 (SSCR1378), Relating to a Study for a South Puna  
Airstrip or Landing Site  
Hearing: April 16, 2015, 10:05 a.m., Room 309

Dear Chair Takayama and Vice Chair Yamashita:

On behalf of myself and the constituents of Council District 1 in Hamakua, County of Hawai'i, I would like to express our support of SCR 71, SD 1 (SSCR1378), and submit a brief testimony as follows:

This resolution requests the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to conduct a study regarding the feasibility and cost of constructing a small, rural landing site or airstrip for use by the National Guard and emergency responders in South Puna and evaluate the possibility of using basalt rebar or lunar basaltic cement in the construction.

I strongly support and urge the enactment of SCR 71, SD 1 (SSCR1378). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valerie T. Poindexter".

Valerie T. Poindexter, Council Member  
District 1, Hamakua

VP/sc

**William P. Kenoi**  
*Mayor*



**Darren J. Rosario**  
*Fire Chief*

**Renwick J. Victorino**  
*Deputy Fire Chief*

**County of Hawai'i**  
**HAWAI'I FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
25 Aupuni Street • Suite 2501 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720  
(808) 932-2900 • Fax (808) 932-2928

April 15, 2015

Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair  
Committee on Public Safety  
State Capitol, Room 229  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Takayama:

**Subject: SCR 71, SD 1**  
**Hearing Date: April 16, 2015**  
**Time/Place: Conference Room 309, 10:05 a.m.**

I am Darren J. Rosario, Fire Chief of the Hawai'i Fire Department (HFD). The HFD supports SCR 71, SD1, which request the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to conduct a study regarding the feasibility and cost of constructing a small, rural landing site or airstrip for use by the National Guard and emergency responders in south Puna and evaluate the possibility of using basalt rebar or lunar basaltic cement in the construction.

The district of Puna has been under the threat of the "July 27 lava flow" that has the potential future to severely impact services to thousands of lower Puna residents. Essentially, the lava flow will cut them off from critical transportation infrastructure, which is their lifeline to amongst other things, critical emergency services. The area of lower Puna, currently impacted by the lava flow is home to nearly 10,000 people who live scattered about the nearly 100 square miles predicted to be isolated by an expected impact to Highway 130. Access to critical emergency services and Emergency Medical Transport to the hospital will be severely delayed due to lengthened travel times. The current time from Pahoia to Hilo via highway 130 is approximately 30 minutes without traffic. Once the flow crosses highway 130 and the alternate Makai routes, travel by ground will then go through the Chain of Craters road and take approximately 2 hours without traffic. Given these challenges it is an absolute necessity to the well being of the residents within the flow to provide alternative travel measures by air and sea.

Retrospective data analysis from the Hawai'i Fire Department shows that approximately 220 emergency incidents are generated from within the impact area per month in which our department is responsible for (Fire, Rescue, EMS, Hazardous Materials).



Gregg Takayama Chair  
April 15, 2015  
Page 2

The District of Puna is roughly the size of the Island of Kauai, has a population of 45,326 and has become one of the fastest growing districts in the State of Hawai'i with a population increase of 44% since 2000. Over the next 15 years the population of Puna is expected to grow to 75,000, nearly half the current population of Hawai'i Island.

The HFD supports SCR 71, SD1. This request is presented to meet the potential increasing demands for Emergency Services on Hawai'i Island specific to Puna in regards to its needs based on the impending lava flow induced isolation. A project of this magnitude takes time. However, the June 27<sup>th</sup> Lava flow event has already shown the need to prepare for the future of lower Puna.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (808) 932-2903 or [fire@co.hawaii.hi.us](mailto:fire@co.hawaii.hi.us) should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darren' followed by a stylized surname.

DARREN J. ROSARIO  
Fire Chief

**yamashita1-Marianne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2015 8:17 AM  
**To:** pbstestimony  
**Cc:** richard@bidleman.net  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR71 on Apr 16, 2015 10:05AM

**SCR71**

Submitted on: 4/15/2015

Testimony for PBS on Apr 16, 2015 10:05AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard Bidleman	Individual	Support	No

Comments: The recent lava flow makes it imperative that we have an emergency landing strip.  
Please vote yes on this bill Thank you

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

## yamashita1-Marianne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2015 8:57 AM  
**To:** pbstestimony  
**Cc:** lennysutton1@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR71 on Apr 16, 2015 10:05AM

### **SCR71**

Submitted on: 4/15/2015

Testimony for PBS on Apr 16, 2015 10:05AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Len Sutton	Individual	Support	No

Comments: My name is Lenny Sutton and I have lived in Hilo for over 20 years and have a successful B&B in Hilo that I have operated for the last 17 years. There certainly is a pressing need for an airport or landing strip of some type in puna...especially given the fact that Lava threatens to cut off a large part of our Big Island population if it does flow across the highway. I would strongly urge the State to consider making this runway adequate for the general aviation community which could be done without costing much more and provide additional services to an area that is much in need.

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## yamashita1-Marianne

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**From:** Carol <carolmurray99@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2015 2:31 PM  
**To:** pbstestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for SCR71

Aloha Representative San Buenaventura and committee members,

I highly support development of an airport in the Puna district.

I am a Hilo based pilot, an aircraft owner and fly voluntarily for the Civil Air Patrol emergency missions.

As our community prepared for the lava threat to highway transportation in the lower Puna district, it became clear that there were no suitable places to land airplanes for relief efforts.

It would also be difficult for emergency personnel to quickly deploy or relocate to areas of need if dependent upon long drives and likely bottlenecked traffic.

An airport should be developed for general aviation use as well a National Guard use. It would not require a control tower and could be fenced for security purposes, without excessive cost. Initially a facility with bathroom (even temporary) and maintenance shed, like the Upulu Airport would be sufficient. Perhaps later it could have some covered or secured places for overnight aircraft.

Thank you for your support of an airport in Lower Puna.

Mahalo,

Carol Murray

Hilo, Hawaii



**yamashita1-Marianne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2015 7:50 PM  
**To:** pbstestimony  
**Cc:** hawaiiijim@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR71 on Apr 16, 2015 10:05AM

**LATE**

**SCR71**

Submitted on: 4/15/2015

Testimony for PBS on Apr 16, 2015 10:05AM in Conference Room 309

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
William	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Building a airstrip ( airport) in lower Puna should have been done years ago. It should include facilities for General Aviation aircraft which should include 20 year lease properties adjacent to taxiways for lessees to build hangars for their aircraft. It will also be very beneficial to Puna residents when the lava crosses highway 130.

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**From:** Dave Partlow <cessnaflyer.partlow@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 16, 2015 4:42 AM  
**To:** pbstestimony  
**Subject:** SCR71

**LATE**

Aloha,

I am a Hilo based pilot, an aircraft owner and fly voluntarily for the Civil Air Patrol emergency missions. I highly support development of an airport in the Puna district.

As our community prepared for the lava threat to highway transportation in the lower Puna district, it became clear that there were no suitable places to land airplanes for relief efforts.

It would also be difficult for emergency personnel to quickly deploy or relocate to areas of need if dependent upon long drives and likely bottleneck traffic.

An airport should be developed for general aviation use as well a National Guard use. It would not require a control tower and could be fenced for security purposes, without excessive cost. Initially a facility with bathroom and maintenance shed, like the Upulu Airport would be sufficient. Perhaps later it could have some covered or secured places for overnight aircraft.

Thank you for your support of an airport in Lower Puna.

Mahalo,

David Partlow

Hawaiian Acres